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Saint Lawrence Catholic Church

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# St. Lawrence Catholic Church



Asheville, North Carolina

1923



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**A Guide**  
to the  
**History, Art and Architecture**  
of  
**The Church of St. Lawrence**  
Asheville, North Carolina



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Prepared by the Ladies of the Altar Society  
With the approval of the Pastor  
Rev. Louis Joseph Bour, M. A., Ph. D.

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THE RT. REV. LEO HAID, O.S.B., D.D.  
BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA

## Pastors

JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS

First Bishop of North Carolina. Purchased the first Catholic Church property in Asheville, N. C., 1868.

THE REV. DR. JEREMIAH P. O'CONNELL

THE VERY REV. LAWRENCE P. O'CONNELL, V.G.

Traveling Missioners of the Carolinas who built the first Catholic Church in Asheville in 1869.

RT. REV. JOHN BARRY, D.D.

The first Catholic Priest to minister in Asheville—about the year 1840.

THE REV. JOHN B. WHITE

The first resident Priest in Asheville.

RT. REV. MSGR. PETER G. MARION, *Pastor*

Rev. Francis J. Gallagher, Curate

RT. REV. MSGR. PATRICK F. MARION, *Pastor*

Rev. James A. Manley, Curate

THE REV. LOUIS JOSEPH BOUR, M.A., PH.L., *Pastor*

Rev. Aloysius C. Adler, Curate

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FRONT VIEW FROM SOUTH



## History

**I**N his valuable History of Catholicity in the Carolinas and Georgia, Rev. J. J. O'Connell tells the following incident which we may well take as the beginning of the history of the church of St. Lawrence:

"Early in the morning as the sun shot his first rays in great splendor over the distant eastern hills, diffusing all around a flood of golden light far more brilliant than St. Peter's illuminated, I erected an altar upon the summit of Mount Mitchell and said Mass. It was the thirtieth of August, the Feast of St. Rose of Lima, the first flower of the American Church. There could be no temple more sublime or more worthy of the Holy Sacrifice which I offered on that Altar. The majestic peaks that stood around like the ancients before the throne of the Lamb, seemed to bare their heads in adoration before their Maker, and I imagined that they rejoiced, after centuries of waiting, in being able to pay their first act of jubilant homage to the Hand that raised them, the witnesses of His power, wisdom, and goodness. All present partook of the Bread of Life, one a sincere convert, A. L. Cardell, and his children, youths in their teens; Mrs. Anne Keenan, and a daughter of Terence Keenan, afterwards an edifying Sister of Mercy, known in religion as Sister Genevieve."

This was in 1866, and in 1868, Bishop James Gibbons, then the young Vicar Apostolic of North Carolina, and afterwards the saintly and famous Cardinal, made his way by stage coach and on horseback to Asheville, at that time a little mountain village almost unknown to fame. It was a journey full of hardships, but full too of hope, for the young Bishop had the gift of being able to see and to call out the best in every one who came within the reach of his own radiant spirit of Faith and Love; and he recognized then what he frequently said afterwards, that, while the people of North Carolina are generally ignorant of the true teachings of the Catholic Church and are therefore prejudiced against it, they sincerely believe in Our Lord Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour, and thus in approaching them, one has always this Faith as a starting point.

Again let us listen to Father O'Connell, who says: "During Bishop Gibbons' first visit to Asheville in 1868, a vacant space, containing about

seven and a half acres in the centre of the town attracted his and the clergy's attention. A more suitable place for a church and other ecclesiastical buildings could not be found. It was purchased at a moderate sum from Col. N. A. Woodfin, an eminent lawyer, who also contributed handsomely towards the contemplated object. The people were anxious for the establishment of a Catholic Church, and when I waited on the principal citizens most of them responded liberally to my appeals for assistance. . . . But the priests, Fathers L. P. and J. P. O'Connell, were obliged to collect money abroad to pay for the site and to build the church. They succeeded after much labor in realizing the necessary funds, and a commodious brick building was erected, and dedicated under the invocation of St. Lawrence."

Father O'Connell does not state here that Bishop Gibbons chose the name of St. Lawrence because this holy martyr was the patron saint of the able, zealous, and ever-faithful Father Lawrence O'Connell to whom the Carolinas owe so much.

The "commodious brick building" so proudly mentioned by our historian was the little church situated on the hill where the school for colored children now stands and which is still locally known as "Catholic Hill." Here a few families, chief among them the ever-faithful Keenans, the pioneer Catholics of this region, and an occasional tourist from among those who were beginning to make summer homes in the mountains of Western Carolina, would assemble at long intervals to hear Mass and to receive the Sacraments. There was at that time no priest stationed near Asheville, and the mountain mission was served in irregular fashion by whatever priest could be spared for a month or two from elsewhere. Among these visiting missionaries the older members of the parish remember with peculiar pleasure Father Price, destined to become known throughout the world as a missionary, first in North Carolina, his native state, and afterwards as the co-founder with Father Walsh of "Mary Knoll," which is doing such great work in training missionaries for China. Father Price died in China, but those who knew him best can never doubt but that his holy soul does unceasingly pray for the beloved people of his own native state.

In 1887 Rev. J. B. White became the first resident pastor of Asheville, and with the far-seeing wisdom which characterized him, he at once realized that the situation of the church was too inaccessible, unless indeed Father O'Connell's dream of a whole group of buildings, church, rectory, schools, etc., could be realized. Father White therefore set about securing another site, and having obtained the present property, he erected thereon a modest wooden structure, and also fitted up the small house which was on the lot as a rectory. The choice of this situation was but another instance of the busi-







FRONT VIEW FROM EAST

ness sense of Father White, which was so valuable in those early days. To him we owe the fine property in Raleigh, Asheville, Salisbury, and a number of other places in the state. No man thought less of his own comfort or pleasure, but when it came to the advancement of the material needs of the church or to the perfection and order of everything that pertained to the Ritual of the Services he exercised a vision, a care, a foresight which were truly remarkable.

Father White was also gifted with an extraordinary knowledge of music and had a most beautiful voice, so that to hear him sing High Mass was like being borne on the wings of harmony to the very gates of paradise.

But even the health of so strong a man as Father White broke down at last under the strain which he constantly put on it and so he begged the Bishop to accept his resignation, stipulating, however, that a young priest, Rev. Peter Marion, should be his successor (another debt of gratitude which we owe to him). Accordingly in the month of August, the month of St. Lawrence as well as of St. Rose of Lima, just twenty-nine years after that first Mass on Mount Mitchell, God in His loving providence, sent to Asheville as pastor of St. Lawrence a priest who by the integrity, the simplicity, the tolerance, and true Christian charity of his character was destined to win the love of every Catholic and the profound respect of every non-Catholic citizen of Asheville, as well as the gratitude of the numberless visitors who constantly sought his aid either as priest or friend. That man was Rev. Peter G. Marion, affectionately known to the congregation as "Father Peter." It was the wish of the Altar Society that he would permit them to publish in this pamphlet his own account of his coming and of the building of the new church; but this request he has steadfastly refused to grant.

However, he tells us that on that August day in 1895, as the train from Raleigh pulled into the Asheville station, Father White met his young successor and handed him a tin box containing four dollars in dimes and nickels, saying as he did so that this would buy something to eat for Father Marion, his mother, and his cousin (now Sister Loretto at St. Joseph's) until the next Sunday. To most of us that greeting would have been rather discouraging, but Father Peter declares that he was quite elated by it, as he had been obliged to borrow the money necessary to buy the tickets from Raleigh to Asheville.

They found the rectory without the absolutely essential housekeeping articles, the church was a little frame building down below the level of the street, the congregation was small and most of the members poor, but there was never a word of complaint from these newcomers.

And small as the church was, the regular congregation filled less than one-half of it, so naturally the need of a new building did not seem urgent until one Sunday in July, 1905, the great architect, Rafael Guastavino, came over from his summer home near Black Mountain, N. C., to attend Mass. Calling on Father Marion afterwards he told him that he had been unable to get a seat, the church was so crowded. Father Marion answered consolingly that after a couple of months there would be plenty of room, as the crowd was due to the number of tourists; whereupon Mr. Guastavino made the truly Catholic speech that our churches ought always to be big enough to take care of the stranger, for all should feel at home in them; and then and there he offered to make the plans and give the dome of a new fireproof structure. But even with this help it was a stupendous undertaking, and to Father Marion who had just recovered from a very severe illness it seemed nothing short of impossible.

But just a little before this time Bishop Haid had sent to Asheville as assistant, Rev. Patrick Marion, Father Peter's younger brother, and one day when the two brothers were talking together about Mr. Guastavino's offer, the younger priest reminded the elder of the promise made by him during his recent illness that if God would spare him to live a few years longer, he would strive to do some special work for His honor and glory.

"Perhaps," said Father Patrick, "this new church is the work that God has spared you to do. We have no means, it is true, but since the thing is needed, God will supply the means if we do our part."

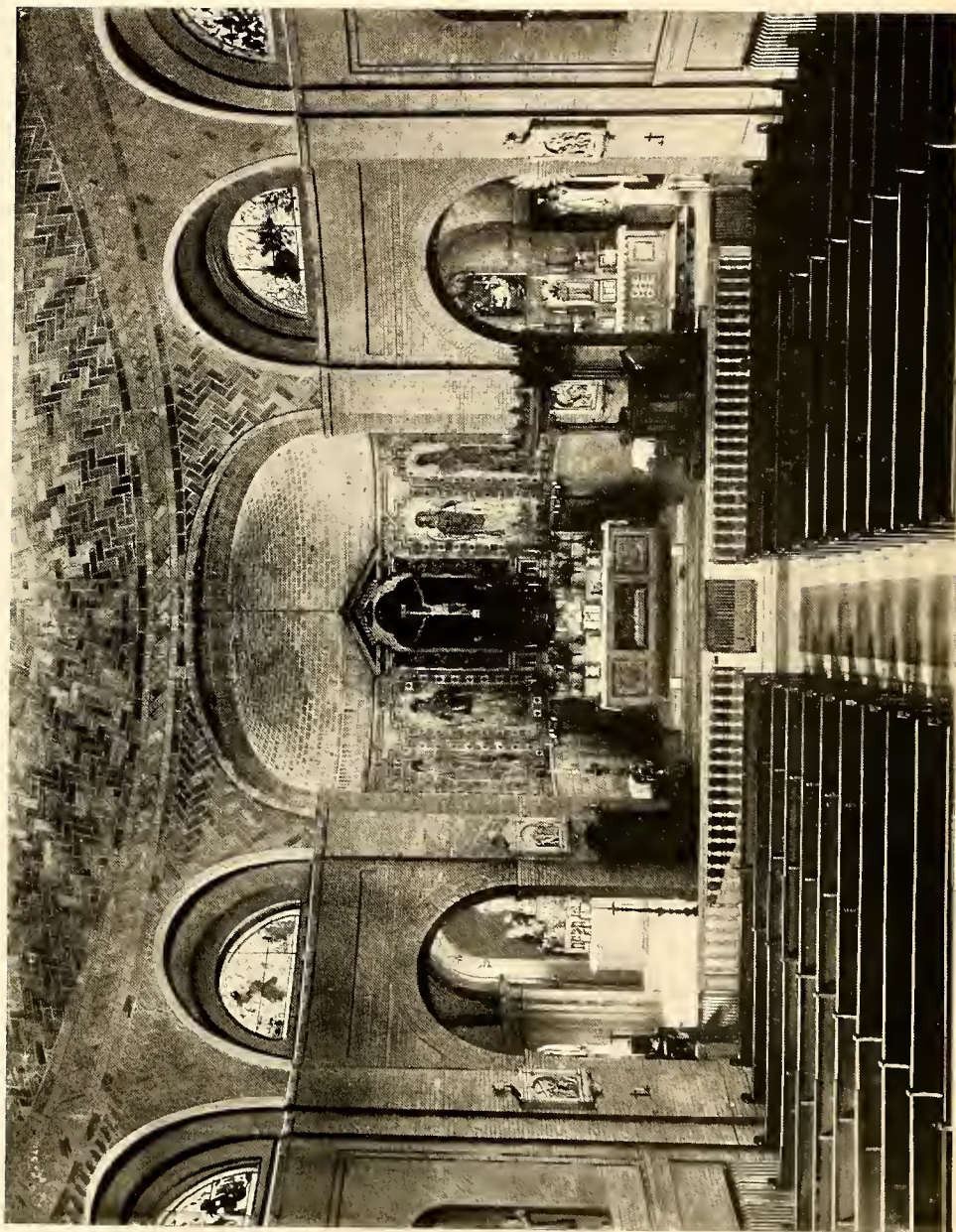
Inspired by this thought, the brothers talked and prayed and planned for this new edifice which should be the expression of their love for God, of their gratitude to Him, and which would give to every Catholic, or indeed to every person, be his faith what it might, a house of prayer in this Land of the Sky. Finally they summoned courage to ask the permission of the Bishop for the undertaking, a permission readily given, and Mr. Guastavino was called upon to furnish the promised plans.

This promise the architect promptly and most fully carried out; and developed designs suited to the present location. The plan finally adopted was an elliptical form, partly on account of the limitations of the site, and also because of the great advantage it would have in eliminating all columns and obstructions. It is an interesting fact in this connection that the prototype of this edifice was the Chapel Nuestra Senora de los Desamparados (Our Lady of the Forsaken), an old church in Valencia, Spain (Mr. Guastavino's native city), which is also covered by an elliptical dome.

The contract was given to a local firm, but the style of architecture was new to them and they soon found that they were losing money, so Father







GENERAL VIEW OF INTERIOR

Marion released them from their contract, and Father Patrick set himself to study the plans night and day in order to qualify as supervising architect, while both he and his brother became workmen, as well as contractors. "And," adds Father Peter, "during the four years we took to complete the building, we never quit for want of money."

The story of how the money came is a story of Faith, zeal, industry, perseverance and generosity such as might be told of the building of those old-world cathedrals where all worked together, each after his own talent or capacity, for the raising of a structure in some degree worthy of the worship of God. Some of the members of the congregation helped in digging out the cellar; Father Peter wrote three thousand letters and sent them all over the country, "And I got only three downright refusals to help," he says, "two of those from millionaires. It is not the millionaires who build our churches," he continues, "but the poor struggling Christian people of faith and devotion." There was a non-Catholic gentleman for whom every member of St. Lawrence's should offer many a prayer, this was Mr. R. S. Howland, who, when the stone for the foundation had all been furnished by his quarry, handed Father Marion a bill marked "paid in full," a truly splendid act of generosity. In hauling this stone a member of the congregation did faithful service, Mr. John O'Donnell furnished a two-horse team and driver for the hauling of the six hundred loads of stone in the basement and also for the hauling of the brick and tile of the upper structure; while Mr. Patrick McIntyre proved himself an ever-present help in time of need, by giving the money for paying the workmen on many a Saturday night when, without his aid, it is hard to see where the Fathers could have found the means to go on with the work. But one day, the outlook was so dark that Father Patrick went out to solicit help, and returned with a large donation from Mr. M. H. Kelly, which, says Father Peter, "tided us over for some time." Thus it went, our Catholic and non-Catholic people helping in the good work; but still there was great stringency in the financial department; and the following incident is too delightfully typical of Father Peter Marion not to be told in his own words, so at the risk of disobeying him it is given below.

"My brother and I worked every day the men worked, and one day I heard the masons yelling for brick and mortar, I looked and saw them standing, trowel in hand. I said to myself, 'It is expensive to have these high-paid men standing idle,' so I at once took charge of the brick pile and mortar box. I kept plenty of help and never again did I hear a mason yell for brick and mortar. One day, while I was busy mixing mortar, a man passed. He would not have recognized me as a priest, there in my overalls,



if it had not been for my Roman collar which I always wore; but the collar made him ask if I were the priest, and on my replying that I was, he said that he wished to go to Confession. I dropped my hoe and went into the house, where my Mother (God rest her soul!) was always ready to brush me and put me in shape for my clerical duties. I went into the church, and then back to work again. The next day I was at the same job when the same man passed by. He stopped and said, 'I see that you are still busy at the mortar box,' and after a little further talk, he said, 'If you will get me a pen, I will give you a donation.' We went into the house together and he wrote a check for a thousand dollars, saying that he, his wife, and son felt that they could not see a priest working so hard and leave the city without making their contribution. Never did a gift come in better time and never did one bring more joy to a pastor's heart, for the funds were running low and the calls were increasing."

The story might go on indefinitely telling of self-sacrifice, of unceasing effort, of unfailing co-operation, of true generosity, from Catholics both in Asheville and elsewhere; and of the growing pride in the church as the beautiful and unique structure began to show in its finished form; but space forbids the yielding to the temptation to record the many touching instances of Asheville's awakening to the realization that a genuine work of ecclesiastical art was rising in our city. To each and every reader of this history the ladies of the Altar Society would say that where all have worked so long and so faithfully, it is impossible to give credit by name to each one, but that the very walls of St. Lawrence's bear everlasting witness to the Faith and zeal of those who so untiringly aided, and also to the generosity of the non-Catholic citizens of Asheville.

Finally in October, 1909, came the day when the church was dedicated by Bishop Haid, a joyful day indeed for him and for the whole state of North Carolina. There was still a debt of \$6,000 on the building, and the fine copper roof had still to be bought, put on, and paid for; and this work had to be done by Father Patrick, for, by this time, Father Peter's health had become so frail, that his physician warned him of the absolute necessity of his doing less work. Accordingly the Bishop made him Rector Emeritus of St. Lawrence and sent him at his own request to Hendersonville, where he is today, loved by all who know him. On May 9, 1917, at St. Lawrence many priests and three bishops assembled to return thanks to Almighty God and to felicitate the congregation of St. Lawrence on the happy occasion of Father Peter Marion's silver jubilee as a priest. It is possible that Father Patrick Marion had even then begun to suspect that his own health was failing, at all events he now bent his superb energy and fine executive ability







NORTHWEST CORNER OF SANCTUARY

to completing the church in every detail and to paying off the debt so that it might be consecrated. In another section we shall speak of the windows, etc., of the finished edifice and we will, as far as we can, give a list of the donors of the various altars, statues, etc.; but we would say here that Father Patrick Marion generally suggested these gifts and memorials as we have them, and it is to his taste and judgment that we owe the consistency with which Mr. Guastavino's plan has been carried out.

Finally on the thirteenth of October, 1920, all was ready and there gathered in Asheville the most notable assembly of distinguished prelates ever seen in North Carolina for the great event of the Consecration of St. Lawrence, the first church ever consecrated in the Vicariate. His Eminence James Cardinal Gibbons, Bishop Leo Haid of the Vicariate of North Carolina, Bishop Russell of Charleston, Bishop McDevitt of Harrisburg, Pa., and Bishop O'Connell of Richmond (a nephew of those brave Fathers O'Connell who had commenced the first St. Lawrence on Catholic Hill); and more than two score priests were present. Bishop McDevitt officiated at the long ceremony of the Consecration; Bishop Russell was the Celebrant of the Grand Pontifical High Mass; and Bishop Haid preached a beautiful sermon vibrating with the deep feeling of the preacher and awakening similar emotions in the hearts of the hundreds who heard him. There were two choirs who rendered the beautiful music both at Mass and at the Pontifical Vespers in the evening. The church was ablaze with lights, flowers and the Cardinal's crimson, and that stately Processional up through the crowded church to the music of the choirs was a sight never to be forgotten. Truly the Consecration was carried out with all the splendor of ritual, all the solemnity of service, all the grandeur of music which the Catholic Church so well knows how to employ on such occasions; but there was no more impressive moment than when the great Cardinal at the close of the Mass came in his simple fashion to the altar rail and standing there, his slight frame seeming still slighter in the flowing crimson robes which he wore as a Prince of the Church, he spoke as a father to his children of his recollections of those early days more than fifty years before, when as the young bishop he had made his way across the mountains to dedicate the first Church of St. Lawrence; of the changes that had come since then; and drawing himself up to his full height, his noble and holy countenance illumined by his Faith and Love, his clear voice making itself heard throughout the church, he assured his hearers that his last message to them was even as his first: "Jesus Christ, yesterday, today, and the same forever." May God give to every reader of this pamphlet the grace to live by these words as James Cardinal Gibbons lived by them all the days of his life.

So remarkable were the services rendered Catholicity by Father Patrick Marion in completing this church and clearing it of debt that the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XV, conferred upon him the high dignity of Monsignor, or Papal Chaplain; and the Church of St. Lawrence was the scene of another solemn ceremony when our Rt. Rev. Bishop invested our honored pastor with the Monsignorial purple on the thirteenth of April, 1921.

It would be ungracious and ungrateful for the Altar Society to leave this subject of the various ceremonies and celebrations in the new church without expressing their own and the whole congregation's sincere appreciation of the very great courtesy and kindness of Mr. Frederick L. Seely upon every occasion when it has been necessary to entertain an unusual number of prelates.

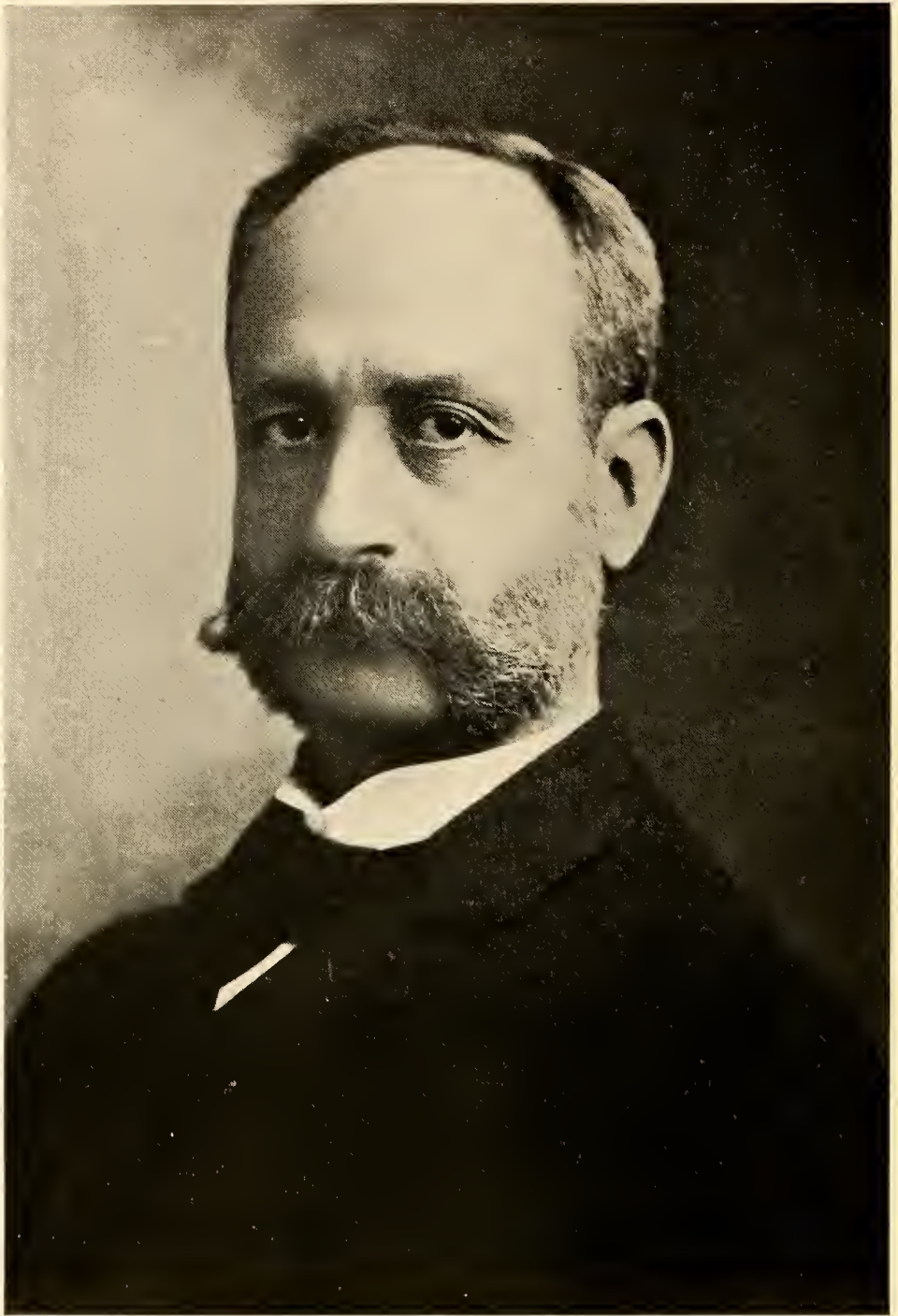
Mr. Seely gave elaborate banquets to the visiting clergy upon all three occasions of Father Peter's Jubilee, the Consecration, and Father Patrick's Investiture; and not content with this, he entertained with princely hospitality Cardinal Gibbons and the four bishops with all of their secretaries at the Consecration throughout their stay in Asheville. Such genuine friendliness as this can never be forgotten by the Catholics of Asheville. Another acknowledgment which we are glad to make here is of the hospitality of Mrs. Safford of Hot Springs, N. C., whose charming entertainments have added so much to the pleasure of the gatherings of which we have been speaking.

Now we must record another great assembly at St. Lawrence when a sorrowing people joined in the solemn Requiems which the Church was chanting for her departed priest. Monsignor Patrick Marion had long been making a losing fight against a fatal disease, and it was only his wonderful will, sustained by his high purpose, which had made it possible for him to go on, until he brought to completion that church, to the building of which he and his devoted brother had given so much of their lives. And when the great work was done, when the Holy Father had recognized it with the signal honor of the Monsignorial dignity, slowly and surely the splendid physique wasted away, and finally in Baltimore, whither he had gone for treatment, on the fifth day of August, 1922, the brave, pure soul of Patrick Francis Marion passed to its reward, and the faithful priest went to join the hosts of those who shall sing for all Eternity the praises of Him who is at once our High Priest and our Victim, Our Lord Jesus Christ. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors for their works do follow them."

His body was brought to St. Lawrence, and there, in the midst of a crowd of his fellow citizens of all creeds and all classes the last solemn rites







SIGNOR RAFAEL GUASTAVINO  
ARCHITECT

were performed, and he was laid to rest in Belmont, N. C., by the side of his saintly mother whom he so tenderly loved.

Yet we know that God buries His workers but His work goes on; and it is with deeply grateful hearts that we record here that the congregation of St. Lawrence has been truly blessed to have as our Rector, Rev. Louis Joseph Bour to whom we pay the high tribute of believing him in every way the worthy successor of those who have preceded him. We close our history by pledging to Father Bour our constant loyal support, and by uttering the prayer which will find a response in every heart, that he may long be spared to carry on the work of the Catholic priest in Asheville, a work bringing comfort and guidance to many souls, both of our congregation and of the numbers who seek health and rest in our beautiful Land of the Sky.

## Architecture and Art

The congregation of St. Lawrence will naturally be interested in the foregoing history of the church, but others will doubtless be more attracted by a study of the completed work. At the risk, therefore, of seeming somewhat didactic, we shall ask the visitor's permission to accompany him as a guide and to explain as we go some of the interesting features of this unique work of ecclesiastical art.

To begin with the exterior, the style chosen by the architect, is the Spanish Renaissance, a peculiarly happy choice since St. Lawrence was born in Huesca, Spain, which is also the native land of Mr. Guastavino. The main facade has as its central figure the statue of St. Lawrence holding in one hand the martyr's palm and in the other a gridiron, the instrument of his martyrdom; as we are told that he was slowly tortured by being stretched on a gridiron over burning coals in order to force him to reveal the treasures which his pagan persecutors believed that he, as almoner of the Christians, was hiding. To the right of St. Lawrence is the statue of St. Stephen, the First Martyr and, like St. Lawrence, a deacon; while to his left is the statue of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, a native of Spain as was St. Lawrence. The lunette over the main entrance is in polychrome terra cotta and represents Christ healing the sick.

In walking around outside of the church one is impressed by the massiveness of the stone foundations and by the solidity of the superstructure of soft-toned brick, and one begins to see how the architect has planned to make the building fireproof, and, as far as any work of man can be, everlasting; there is not a beam of wood or even of steel in the whole edifice; all walls, floors, and vaultings are of tile or other masonry materials, and

the roof itself is of tile with a copper covering. Even in the interior this fine simplicity and durability of structure is preserved and one has an indescribable sense of harmony and permanence, brought about by the dignified sincerity of the whole work.

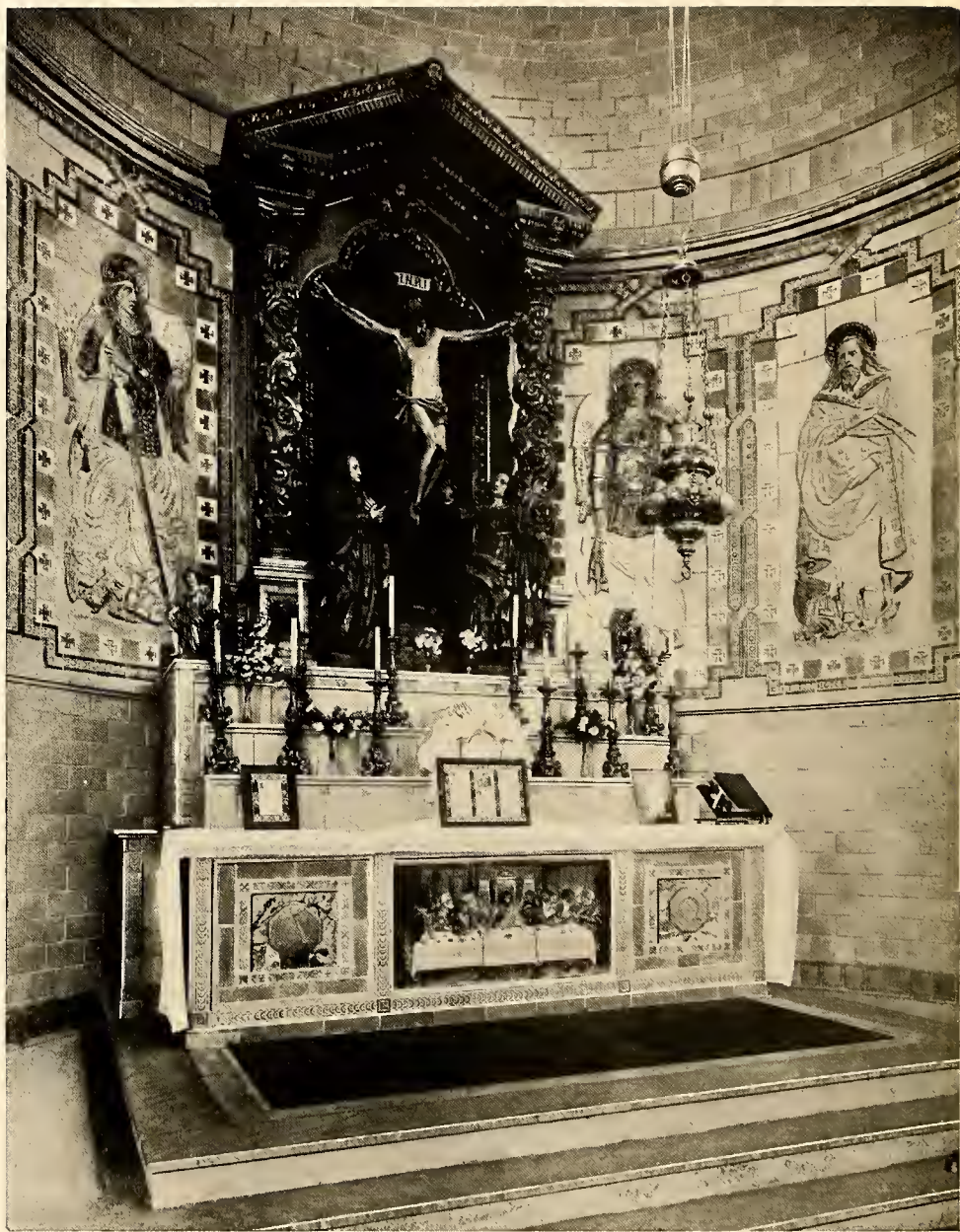
Entering the vestibule, which is separated from the church proper by the screens of embossed leather and of stained glass (the gift of Mr. Louis Carr) we may pause to note again the solidity of the structure, for the very steps to the organ loft are without wood or nails. On either side of the main door are two small stained glass windows, but it is only after we have entered the church and are standing at the foot of the main aisle that we realize the beauty of the ellipse and the wonder of the dome, Mr. Guastavino's masterpiece; it is built wholly of tiles and is entirely self-supporting, having a clear span of 58 x 82 feet, and being the largest dome of elliptical type over any church in this country. It was wholly donated by Mr. Guastavino and erected under his daily supervision; and it had not long been completed when he was suddenly stricken with a dangerous illness which proved fatal; and, as was only fitting, his body now rests in a crypt especially built near the entrance to the Lady Chapel. He left the designs and plans of the Main Altar and Lady Chapel still to be made; but fortunately for Asheville and St. Lawrence Church, he also left a son, Rafael Guastavino, who inherits his father's skill and generosity as well; and this son has most beautifully completed his father's unfinished work.

To the artistic visitor after admiring the great expanse of the dome, the next point of interest will probably be the group of the Crucifixion above the Main Altar, and this interest will be increased when one finds that the whole design of the altar was brought about by the acquisition of these precious relics of the past. Mr. Guastavino tells the story as follows:

"Some twenty years ago a church in one of the cities of Northern Spain, now very much reduced from its former splendor, contained a beautiful reredos in carved walnut which reached the whole height of the Sanctuary wall, 60 feet or more, and was composed of a series of architectural motifs of three to four tiers of columns superimposed, these columns decreasing towards the top. This wonderful piece of work was in imminent danger of being crushed by the apse wall which partly supported it, and which was beyond repair. The reredos was disposed of to acquire the needed funds to rebuild the walls and make other necessary repairs to the church, and two of the columns of the second tier with the Crucifixion group were acquired for our church after some years of wandering, from place to place, as if seeking to reach the spot for which they were originally intended."







HIGH ALTAR AND REREDOS

This beautiful group is a fine piece of Spanish wood-carving of the middle seventeenth century, and represents the Blessed Mother of Jesus and St. John standing at the foot of the cross upon which Our Crucified Lord is dying. Quite apart from its deeply devotional quality, this group is well worth detailed study because it is a rare and very fine example of Spanish art in the seventeenth century. The Main Altar under this altar piece is also most unusual and beautiful; its Tabernacle, composed of faience covered with a pearly, creamy glaze, represents two angels, one on each side, drawing back the curtains from the door on which is in relief a figure of Our Saviour holding a cross; the lower part of the altar is made almost entirely of glazed tile of various colors, and in the front is a terra cotta panel of The Last Supper, a copy of Leonardo da Vinci's famous fresco in Milan. The reredos fills the entire wall space on either side of the apse wall and is made of polychrome terra cotta. Two archangels, St. Raphael (with the fish in his right hand and a sword in his left) and St. Michael (grasping a sword with both hands), stand one on either side of the altar as if guarding the Crucifix; while to the right of St. Michael are the two Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. Mark; and to St. Raphael's left are St. Luke and St. John (these Evangelists are easily recognized by their symbols which are at their feet, the angel for St. Matthew, the lion for St. Mark, the bull for St. Luke, and the eagle for St. John). This reredos is unique in that, to our knowledge, the use of polychrome terra cotta had not been heretofore attempted on such a large scale for this decorative purpose in any church in this country. The carrying out of this part of the work entailed great difficulties; the pieces had to be fired time and again for the various colored glazes with subsequent disappointments and losses before the requisite number of pieces were obtained. The visitors who have seen the beautiful terra cotta panels and altars of Luca della Robbia in Italy will appreciate the task of executing this reredos fifteen years ago when polychrome work of this character was in its infancy in this country. It may be of interest to note that the figures are more than seven feet high and each half of the reredos is 11 feet by 18 feet in length.

The Bishop's throne, the acolytes' seats, and the pulpit are of select quartered oak, made in Columbus, Ohio.

The pulpit is the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Loughran in memory of their splendid young son, First Lieutenant Lawrence B. Loughran, who was killed in France while bravely fighting his country's battles. The Bishop's throne and the acolytes' seats were given by Mr. and Mrs. Martin Rothan.



The beautiful marble altar rail with its fine gates of green bronze was presented by Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Du Pont of Wilmington, Delaware, as a memorial of their only son, Gerald Fitzgerald Du Pont.

The Main Altar is the munificent gift of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick McIntyre given in memory of their parents, Joseph and Sarah McIntyre and Captain John and Eleanor McGrath.

The Chapel of St. Joseph was given in its entirety by Mr. John O'Donnell in memory of his parents, Condry and Ellen O'Donnell.

For the past twenty-five years Mrs. O. C. Hamilton gave her faithful and valuable service in the choir, also purchased at her own expense the necessary music. Mrs. Hamilton donated generously whenever occasion offered.

Miss Daisy Cooke has been ever faithful at the organ these many years. For many years she received no remuneration for her service.

Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Needham of Columbus, Georgia, have been ever generous contributors to St. Lawrence Church.

Mr. L. L. Jenkins of Asheville and Washington, non-Catholic, aided substantially in liquidating the Parish indebtedness.

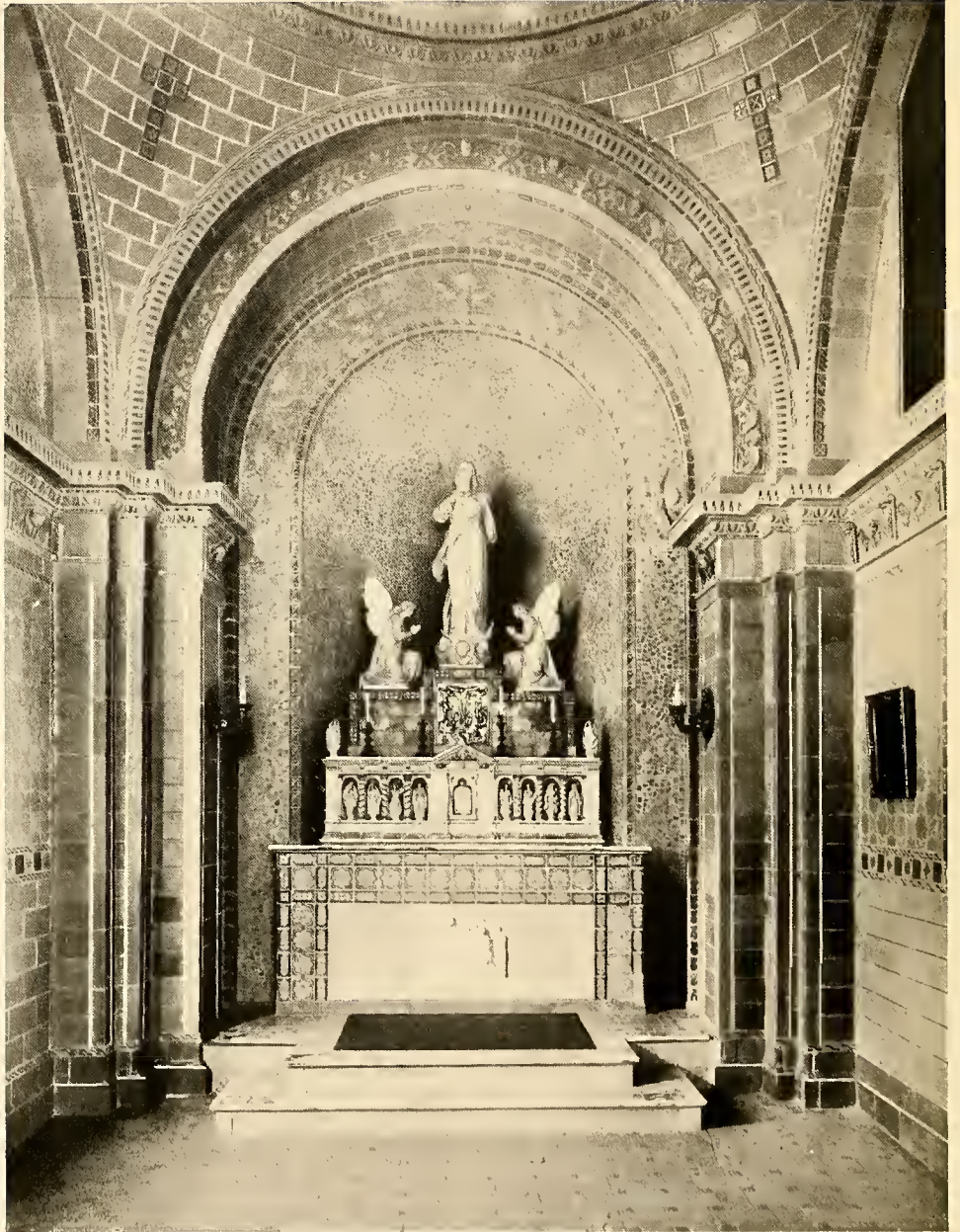
Hundreds of others have given generously towards the building of St. Lawrence Church.

## The Lady Chapel

We turn now to the Lady Chapel than which it would be hard to find anything of its kind more exquisite. The prevailing color is a delicate blue which forms a beautiful background for the creamy white marble statue of Our Blessed Lady as the Immaculate Conception, the figure suggesting at once the great picture by Murillo and possessing the same sort of virginal purity and sweetness. Inserted in the upper part of this altar is a superb old panel, "The Crucifixion," attributed to the famous old pottery of Capo di Monte in Italy. The spirit and charm of this panel cannot be expressed but happily those who are reading this description will see it for themselves. On either side are onyx tiles.

The Tabernacle below is another exquisite piece of faience in a pearly cream glaze touched here and there with vitreous colors. On either side is a little colonnade with niches containing the following Saints with their respective symbols: beginning at the extreme left, St. Margaret with a crucifix in her hand and a broken chain at her feet; St. Lucia with a lamp in her hand; St. Cecilia with a harp; St. Catherine of Alexandria with a sword, book and wheel. On the other side in the same order are St. Barbara





CHAPEL OF OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION  
(THE GUASTAVINO MEMORIAL CHAPEL)

with a castle; St. Agnes with a lamp; St. Agatha with breasts in her hands; St. Rose of Lima with a crucifix. Over the ends of the colonnade are two sisters, St. Rufia on the left and St. Justa on the right, they are the patronesses of Sevilla, Spain, and they are always represented pictorially with vases or alcarrazas in their hands because they were daughters of a potter.

Inlaid in the delicate blue field of tiles at the base of the altar front is an old Italian marble fragment representing the Nativity; while forming a frame around the altar front is a series of colored tiles bearing in gold lettering titles of Our Lady selected from those which the Church has applied to her in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

Around the arch of this exquisite altar are seven doves, typifying the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and the fear of the Lord, with which gifts the Virgin Mother of Jesus was so preeminently endowed.

The door to the Sacristy from this chapel is of Spanish design and has a fine old panel representing The Good Shepherd as is told on the scroll which bears the words: "Pastor Bonus." Above this door is an old painting by an unknown artist portraying the Visitation.

On the wall on either side of the door are two small paintings, copies of Italian old masters.

The large stained glass windows represent St. Mary of the Sea, and the small one above St. Rafael, the archangel. On the same wall near the crypt of Mr. Guastavino is a very old copy of one of Murillo's famous Madonnas. The door here is of lustre glazed tiles framed in bronze and is the entrance to the crypt in which rests all that was mortal of the generous Catholic and gifted architect, Rafael Guastavino, to whom the congregation of St. Lawrence must now and always owe a debt of everlasting remembrance. It is right that he should be laid to rest here where this exquisite Lady Chapel will forever bear witness to the devotion and genius of himself and of his gifted son.

## **St. Joseph's Chapel**

On the left of the Main Altar, but to the visitor's right, is a much plainer but still beautiful chapel, intended as St. Joseph's, but now generally called The Sacred Heart chapel because of the statue which has been placed there. The altar piece here is a window from the little frame church let into the wall like a panel and representing The Nativity. This altar, as also its apse walls, merit more than a passing glance, for examination will show



that both altar and walls are largely made of broken bits of tiles, and when we realize that this work, as fine as some mosaics, was done by the Fathers Marion who pieced together with their own hands these bits and made them into this harmonious whole, we begin to understand the infinite patience and accuracy of the two brothers, and we can imagine how precious to St. Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth, must be this chapel dedicated to him. The large stained glass window here represents the death of St. Joseph in the arms of Jesus and Mary; and the small one is of St. Lawrence with the martyr's palm and his gridiron symbol. Both of these were in the little church of Father White's time. The group of statuary in this chapel representing Our Lord's Agony in Gethsemane is the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Edward H. Brunner.

The lavish use of tiles throughout this church might well call forth the query, "Where did they come from?" They were made in the little town of Woburn, Massachusetts, where Mr. Guastavino had established a factory and they represent years of experimental work. Indeed the story of these experiments with their varying success would of itself make a highly interesting chapter in the history of ceramic art in America. It was in the course of them that Rafael Guastavino, Jr., discovered the lustre glaze which he has used to such good effect in the tiles for the door to the crypt of his father, just off the Lady Chapel.

## The Windows

Perhaps the best spot for getting the full effect of the dome and the oval of the whole plan, as also for seeing the windows, is in front of the central gates of the Sanctuary, looking toward the main entrance. Just under the vaulting of the dome is a gem-like frieze of ten semi-circular windows all, except one (which represents the Conversion of St. Paul), portraying scenes in the Gospel Story, beginning with The Annunciation and ending with The Appearance of The Risen Savior to Mary Magdalen. The two very large and handsome windows on either side of the church represent Christ healing the afflicted (east side) and The Transfiguration (west side).

In the organ loft, the large window portrays The Resurrection, and flanking this on the right are a cinquefoil window with St. Peter as the subject, and a smaller one above, to the honor of the Four Evangelists; while the cinquefoil to the left has, as subject, St. Paul, with the one above commemorating the four Latin Fathers of the Early Church, Sts. Jerome, Gregory, Ambrose, and Augustine. All of these windows were made in Munich.







ST. JOSEPH'S CHAPEL  
(GENERALLY STYLED SACRED HEART CHAPEL)

In the four niches of the main body of the church there are four statues, the work of Deprate Statuary Company of Italy. On the west side stands St. Peter with his keys, and facing him on the east side St. Patrick with his crozier, shamrock, and scallop shell (referring to his baptizing his converts). These two statues were selected by their donors because these two saints were the patrons of Fathers Peter and Patrick Marion, an eminently fitting selection as all who read this pamphlet will readily grant. In the niches near the entrance are statues of St. Cecilia on the west and St. Rose of Lima on the east. When one of the Altar Society asked Father Patrick why these two saints were chosen, he answered with an Irish twinkle in his eye, "Sure! aren't the women to be represented everywhere now?" But it is easy to see another reason for the choice. St. Rose was the first saint of the Americas to be canonized and St. Cecilia is the patroness of organ music throughout the world.

The stations of the Cross placed around the church represent, as every Catholic knows, the toilsome journey of Our Suffering Lord from the hall of Pilate to Calvary. His death, the deposition from the Cross and the burial in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. The stations are of Rigalico and, like everything else in the church, they are gifts from various persons.

We cannot close this very imperfect description of the interior of St. Lawrence without urging everyone interested in ecclesiastical art to give detailed study to this church, for the assertion may be safely made that a careful consideration of the symbolism, the beauty, and "the reason for being" of every detail, of the pictures, the tiles, the windows, and the statuary, would go far toward preparing one for artistic appreciation of those great works of art in America and Europe which have delighted the world and have lifted the human spirit to some sort of true perception of the sublime and the beautiful.

In such a study it is well to remember always that there is no rite nor symbol in the Catholic Ceremonial and in Christian Art which has not its own religious significance, and if we find ourselves unable to understand or to appreciate what we see, it is always possible that the lack may to some degree be in ourselves.









NORTHEAST CORNER OF SANCTUARY

# Stained Glass Memorial Windows

SEMICIRCULAR WINDOWS—GOSPEL SIDE

## **The Annunciation**

In memory of  
JAMES H. LOUGHRAN

## **The Visitation**

In memory of  
NORA BRYAN CAMPBELL

## **The Nativity**

In memory of  
J. K. FARGE

## **The Teaching in The Temple**

In memory of  
WILLIAM AND MARY O'DONOVAN

## **The Conversion of St. Paul**

In memory of  
MRS. J. H. BOSSE

SEMICIRCULAR WINDOWS—EPISTLE SIDE

## **The Marriage Feast of Cana**

In memory of  
R. A. HICKS AND FAMILY

## **Raising to Life Daughter of Jairus**

In memory of  
WILLIAM AND ANNA REAGAN

## **The Calming of the Wind and Waves**

In memory of  
CATHERINE HARRINGTON

## **The Agony in the Garden**

In memory of  
MARY MCKENZIE

## **The Meeting of Mary Magdalene**

In memory of  
FRED WARD

GALLERY

## **The Ascension of Our Lord**

In memory of  
MRS. MARY MARION



LARGE EAST WINDOW

**Christ Healing the Sick**

In memory of  
MARGARET LOUGHRAN

VESTIBULE WINDOW

**Bishop Haid's Coat of Arms**

In memory of  
MARGARET HESS

LARGE WEST WINDOW

**The Transfiguration of Our Lord**

In memory of  
AGNES E. FOX

VESTIBULE WINDOW

**Pope Pius X Coat of Arms**

In memory of  
A. BURNES

**St. Peter**

In memory of  
LUCIAN FABRICOTTI

**Death of St. Joseph**

In memory of  
MRS. M. FISCHER

**Tower Window**

In memory of  
JOHN REILLEY





THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN GROUP STATUE

## Partial List of Memorials

*With Names of Donors*

THE PULPIT	THE AGONY GROUP STATUE
MR. AND MRS. FRANK LOUGHRAN	MR. AND MRS. EDW. BRUNNER
SANCTUARY CHAIRS	STATUE—ST. ROSE OF LIMA
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MR. AND MRS. MAURICE DU PONT	MR. AND MRS. J. G. DESCHLER
VESTIBULE ENCLOSURE	STATUE—ST. PATRICK
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## THE GUASTAVINO MEMORIAL CHAPEL (THE LADY CHAPEL)

## Stations of the Cross

(Donated by the following)

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STATION	II.	MR. AND MRS. J. T. JAMES
STATION	III.	MR. AND MRS. JOHN BRANAGAN
STATION	IV.	MRS. J. T. GRACE
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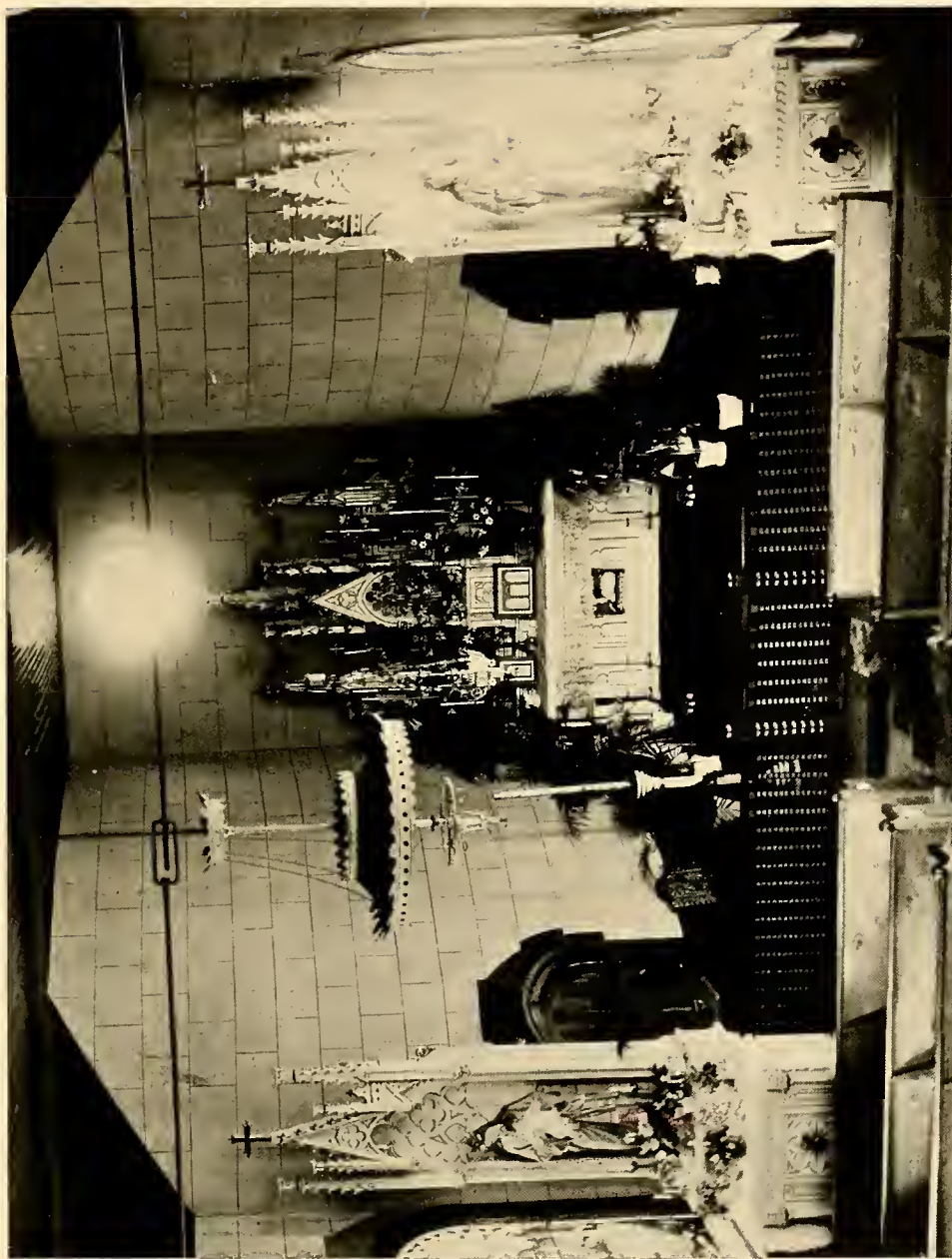


NORTHEAST CONER OF MAIN VESTIBULE

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	STATUE OF ST. JOSEPH
	MR. J. SCHEINLEY

NOTE.—Since this booklet went to press the present Rector, Rev. Louis J. Bour, has found among the papers of the late Rector, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Marion, a list of many donations along with the names of the donors. It is a source of very great regret to Father Bour and to the Altar Society that this list was not found in time to give it in this edition. It will be carefully preserved, and should there be, as we hope there will be, a second edition, the complete revision and all the names will be given. However, the Rector and the Ladies of the Altar Society console themselves with the knowledge that these generous and devout benefactors of St. Lawrence did not make their sacrifices and their gifts for human glory and for recognition before the world. Their high motive was the honor and glory of God and they have OUR LORD'S own assurance in the Gospels that not even a cup of cold water given in His name shall go unrewarded. We wish here to give them also our promise that in our poor prayers all of them will be included when we remember before the Throne of Grace those who by their piety and unstinted generosity have made possible our beautiful church—an everlasting memorial of their munificence and Faith, and every reader of these pages is asked to repeat this prayer for our benefactors. VOUCHSAFE, O LORD, TO REWARD WITH ETERNAL LIFE ALL THOSE WHO HAVE DONE US GOOD, FOR THY NAME'S SAKE. Amen.

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GENERAL INTERIOR VIEW OF OLD ST. LAWRENCE  
(FATHER WHITE'S CHURCH)







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